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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

30 MAR 1982

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Mr. Walter L. Barrows
Project Chairman
National Defense University
Washington, D.C. 20319

Dear Sir:

Your unconventional warfare study was very much appreciated by this Agency and parallels much of our thinking on this subject. Given the understandable reluctance of the major powers to take any action which would precipitate large scale conventional or nuclear conflict and the continuing desire on the part of the Soviet Union to expand its area of influence, there is little doubt that unconventional and psychological warfare will play a substantial role in supporting U.S. policy interests in the years ahead. A major hurdle in expanding such activity is, of course, the domestic psychological climate, as well as the ability of any administration to prevent leaks concerning sensitive activities and programs. If we can overcome these obstacles, unconventional operations, covert and overt, can serve an increasingly useful function in supporting U.S. foreign policy. Regarding the policy guidance your study outlined, we are particularly supportive of these as being necessary to ensure control and minimize risks in unconventional operations. Too often these factors are overlooked by senior decision makers who do not thoroughly understand the capabilities and limitations of unconventional activities.

The suggestion regarding a central planning group is interesting and deserves further consideration, although the bureaucratic problems in implementing the idea appear to be formidable. We believe there will be great reluctance on the part of the Congress to legalize the direct utilization of military personnel in paramilitary operations.

The question of closer collaboration with analytical and estimative elements may be valid but we are not aware of serious problems in this area. The sensitivity of unconventional operations necessitates restrictions not otherwise applicable and these may inhibit the exchange of information and planning effectiveness. We would be glad to examine this area more closely to determine whether improvements could be made.

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Again, we would like to express our thanks for your study. Making changes in the way any administration conducts its sensitive business is always difficult. The original thought which you have brought to this subject deserves careful consideration and we would welcome an opportunity to pursue the questions you raise further with appropriate representatives from interested U.S. Government agencies.

Sincerely,

/s/ Clair E. George

Clair E. George
Acting Deputy Director for Operations

/s/ John N. McMahon

John N. McMahon
Executive Director

DDO/IAD/SAG: GKD:dpt

Orig - Addee
1 - Exec. Dir
1 - Exec. Reg
1 - D/OP
1 - DDO/ADDO
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1 - C/IAD
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